

U.S. Labor Party: Far to the Left Of the Far Left

By William Chapman
By a Washington Post Staff Writer

For Noam Chomsky, a linguist and veteran left-wing theoretician, it has been going on for two years. Meetings where he speaks are disrupted. He's denounced as a Central Intelligence Agency employee, a tool of the Rockefellers. There are nebulous threats of more serious trouble to come.

Marcus Raskin of the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies, a leftist think-tank, gets it as he comes in the door of his office near Dupont Circle. Young men call him "scum" and "nuclear terrorist" and other names.

Paul Kurtz, editor of The Humanist magazine in Buffalo, heard it for three years. There were the telephone calls at 4 a.m., and in the classrooms where he lectures at the State University of New York men suddenly appeared shouting, "Why are you practicing genocide?"

It has been happening, off and on, for five years to Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, college professors and authorities on the urban poor. They have been followed around the country on speaking tours, where meetings are disrupted and participants intimidated. Three years ago in Atlantic City, Piven was almost pushed down a flight of stairs by a gang that followed her onto the street screaming "fascist" and "CIA agent."

Lester Brown, president of the Worldwatch Institute, which studies world food and population issues, lectured one summer in Denver, Minneapolis, Bucharest and Rome. At each lecture, the harassment was similar—charges of "genocide" and "war criminal," a threat to hang him "from the lamppost."

These experiences are matched by many other public figures, mostly on the left of U.S. politics, from organizations ranging from the Communist Party to the United Auto Workers. They are usually similar—meetings disrupted, threats shouted, vague

warnings and a rash of obscenities. Their antagonists, according to the victims, identify themselves as members of the National Caucus of Labor Committees or its political arm, the U.S. Labor Party.

To their targets, the Labor Party and the NCLC are mysteries. To some they are a deadly menace determined to disrupt every other organization on the American left. To others they're a fantasy-ridden but harmless remnant of 1960s radicalism.

This year, the party has blossomed in a new role—the vehicle for Lyndon H. LaRouche, chairman of NCLC and presidential candidate of the Labor Party. The party's officials claim he will be on the ballot in 21 to 28 states. The party is spending an average of \$5,000 a week on lawsuits to qualify for ballot position. LaRouche says he will spend up to \$500,000 on the race.

In an interview last week, LaRouche was asked how he expected a party with a 5-year record of harassment and threats to win election.

"So my chances of winning the election are very good," said LaRouche, with a smile. "It's a new ball game."

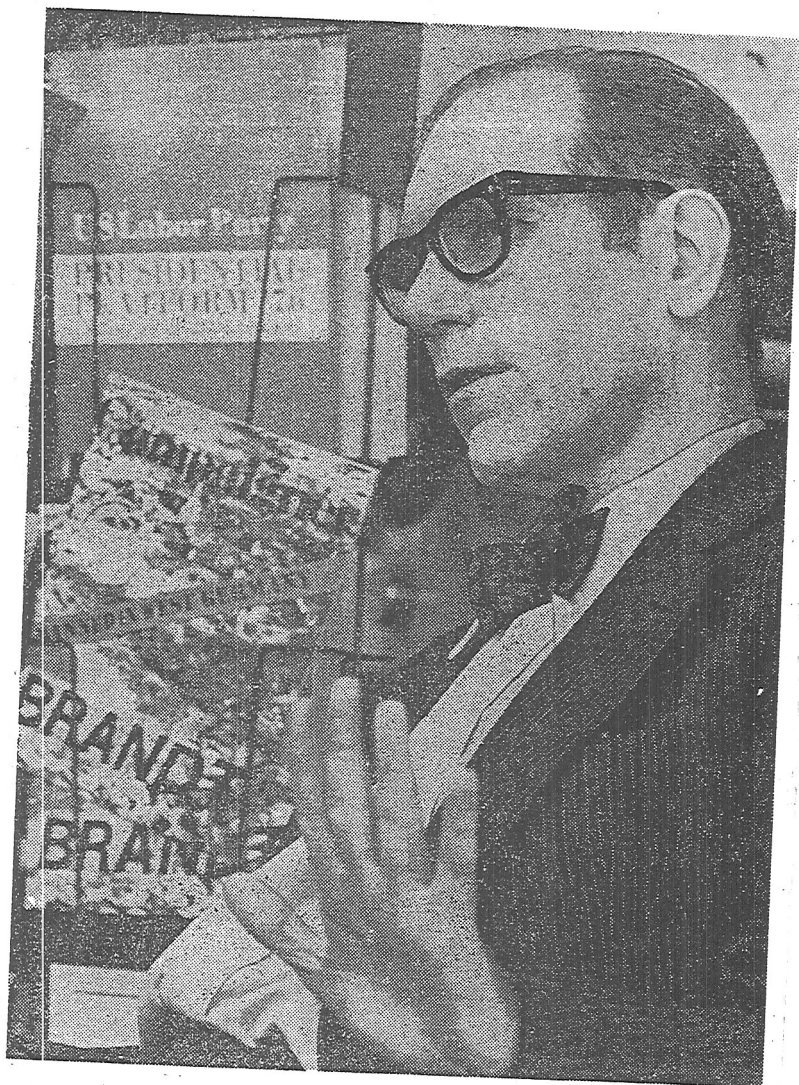
He did not deny the incidents, but insisted that, "We are only engaged in an open political attack. We just want to challenge them in debate."

Then he attacked them, one by one. "Raskin is a fascist," he said. "Chomsky is a criminal. Kurtz? We've got the evidence on him. Brown — his Worldwatch is a Rockefeller outfit whose mission is to determine who survives and dies in a worldwide epidemic."

LaRouche denied that his followers had threatened anyone with physical harm. "Sure, we're going to get them — but politically," he said.

LaRouche, 53, is a veteran of leftist movements, including the Socialist Workers Party, and a former computer technician, teacher and author of a book on economics.

A Marxist, he says he started building the NCLC in 1968 after his original "counter-insurgency" organization was "destabilized" by his enemies, which he says, ranged from the Ford



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Lyndon H. LaRouche: "We are only engaged in an open political attack."

Foundation to the CIA. He says he began recruiting people who had been active in other radical groups in the 1960s.

Today, the NCLC and its Labor Party occupy the top floors of a building in New York's garment district. Money appears to be plentiful, and expenses are sometimes lavish. The NCLC operates a teletype network connecting New York with offices in 13 U.S. cities and a two-way, 24-hour connection to Wiesbaden, Germany.

The organization has never disclosed a complete tabulation of its income and expenditures. In a deposition taken during a lawsuit by the UAW, according to U.S. Magistrate Martin D. Jacobs, one NCLC lawyer said the organization had an annual budget of \$1.5 million.

LaRouche says the money comes from party dues, small contributions and sales of publications, including the *New Solidarity*, a twice-weekly newspaper, and *The Campaigner*, a theoretical journal.

NCLC membership, based primarily in 13 cities, appears to be small, ranging from 20 to 100 persons in each city, according to non-party sources. LaRouche claims a hard-core party cadre of 1,800. Edward Spannaus, director of organization, testified in a deposition taken in New York that it was about 1,000. LaRouche also claims there are 13,000 additional party organizers who spend part of their time working on party projects. He says that he cannot identify them.

"They are largely clandestine," he said. "... We may see each of them only for a minute or a minute and a half every week."

Since 1973, the Labor Party has run candidates in many local and congressional elections, usually winning an insignificant percentage of the vote. However, in Seattle's municipal elections last year, a Labor Party member running for city council won 27 per cent of the vote, and another candidate, running for city treasurer against the incumbent, got 20 per cent.

Their campaign tactics are sometimes controversial. In a Baltimore municipal election last year, city council candidate Grenville Whitman says, he was described in Labor Party leaflets as a Nazi and a dope peddler and that his supporters at the polls were harassed. He is suing for libel.

Many on the liberal to radical side of American politics believe LaRouche's goal is to wreck, or at least disrupt, their organizations. LaRouche acknowledges that that was his goal in 1968 when he formed the NCLC out of the wreckage of a splinter of the Students for a Democratic Society and attracted some of its members.

"We knew that the left was dead," he said, "and that it was only a British Fabian kind of operation. We wanted to bust it up politically, and pull out their people who were in the wrong place. It was a very sophisti-

cated operation."

One of his later targets was the old National Welfare Rights Organization, once headed by the late George Wiley. LaRouche claims his workers moved in and "destabilized" NWRO (setting up a new, competing organization with the initials NUWRO) because NWRO had become wedded to a government program of forcing welfare mothers to work. NWRO veterans say the organization would have collapsed anyway, but that LaRouche's infiltration may have helped.

Bert DeLeeuw, once a special assistant to Wiley, remembers that in NWRO's last days Wiley was harassed at several meetings by NCLC members. His organization's mailing list was stolen and members received confusing letters inviting them to a convention of the new organization launched by NCLC.

"They had excellent intelligence on what was going on, things that I thought were secret strategy," DeLeeuw said. "They had someone inside. The collapse of NWRO would have happened without them, but the NCLC speeded it along."

Others also believe LaRouche's organizations have had limited success in disrupting left-wing groups. In Buffalo, Labor Party members engaged in picketing an unemployment center. They swore out warrants accusing the picketers of physical violence, losing all their cases in court.

But the picketers' lawyer, Leonard Klaif, said, "Actually those incidents served their purpose. They got our people off the streets, tied them up in court."

In recent years, some NCLC activities have been marked by sporadic violence. In April, 1973, a Communist Party conference in New York turned into a melee when about 20 persons, identified as NCLC members, interrupted the proceedings. That same month, about 40 to 50 members disrupted a mayoralty speech and fights broke out.

It is LaRouche's view that almost all left-wing groups except his are involved in conspiracies initiated by the Rockefeller family, the "lower Man-

hattan banks" and the CIA. At the center, he claims is Raskin's Institute for Policy Studies, which he asserts created the radical Weathermen group and is now using the Communist Party in an attempt to wreck his Labor Party. "There is no act of terrorism in the world that is not tracked back to Raskin," he said.

Asked if he had evidence to prove conspiracies, LaRouche said it would be forthcoming. He said the party is now producing "a computer cross-related study" of the organizations, ranging from the Institute for Policy Studies to the CIA, which he claims have conspired against him and his followers.

Asked the source of the material for his computer study, he mentioned Internal Revenue Service files on tax-exempt organizations. When run through the computer, he said, these would show the "tie-up" among the groups hostile to his.

As candidate for President, LaRouche pours out a stream of invective against most other politicians. Rockefeller and the CIA, he said, are promoting policies of "genocide" in all underdeveloped countries. Jimmy Carter, the Democratic presidential

nominee, "is a nitwit to begin with, an empty slop jar into which bad lemonade is being poured," he said. Oddly, for one who claims to represent the radical left, LaRouche approves of conservative Republicans such as President Ford.

"I call them honest Americans," he said. "Ford is a known quantity we can live with."

His campaign oratory includes a variety of apocalyptic forecasts usually hinged to the anticipated collapse of the world monetary system. "... We are currently in the collapse phase of the general breakdown crisis of the postwar monetary system," he has said.

LaRouche's victory scenario this fall is an unusual one by any campaign standards. "I expect a number of things to happen globally before the end of September that will shatter politics in the United States," he said last week.

The key element will be the declaration of a debt moratorium by all developing countries, an act that would ruin New York banks, shatter the international monetary system and cause an economic disaster in this country, he said.